

In-Person Articling Requirement Policy

Purpose

The Law Society of Saskatchewan regulates the legal profession in the public interest by ensuring its members meet and maintain high standards of integrity and competence. The articling experience is a cornerstone in the development of new lawyers. The purpose of the in-person articling requirement is to help ensure that the goal of articling is achieved, namely, that articling students acquire the knowledge, skills and attributes required to competently and ethically serve the public upon admission to the practice of law in Saskatchewan.

Definitions

For the purposes of this policy, “articling work period” refers to the period of time during which the student-at-law is actively serving articles. It excludes the time during which the articling student attends the Bar Admission Program, time spent on vacation, and time away for illness or other personal reasons.

The In-Person Articling Requirement

The Law Society of Saskatchewan requires that articling students complete their articling work period at the physical office or workplace of the principal.

Rationale

The purpose of articling is to provide a high-quality learning and growth experience for articling students so that they develop into competent and ethical professionals. In-person articles provide an environment that is most conducive to achieving this goal. The learning opportunities for articling students during articles include:

- Gaining exposure to and developing a range of competencies through observation and practice with regular feedback.
- Reflecting on their practice and performance in a supportive environment.
- Learning to identify and address ethical issues in a practical context.
- Becoming socialized into the legal profession, including gaining an understanding of the courtesies and civilities expected of lawyers.
- Building relationships with work colleagues and others in the legal community.
- Experiencing a sense of community within the workplace and broader legal community.
- Developing a mentor-mentee relationship with an experienced lawyer (the principal).
- Observing high levels of professionalism on the part of the principal and firm lawyers.

Scope of the In-Person Requirement

The requirement for in-person articles applies to all articling students and articling arrangements, including: standard articles, articling secondments, assigned articles, composite articles and joint articles.

Distance Proceedings and Meetings

With the rise in the use of technology to deliver legal services, articling students will no doubt encounter situations in which remote attendance at meetings, court or other proceedings is necessary. These scenarios are considered a normal part of the articling experience in the age in which we live and work, and in fact are beneficial to articling training. The Law Society encourages articling students to gain this experience.

Occasional Remote Days

There may be days when a principal does not come into the office and may suggest that the articling student work from home that day. Articling students should not be concerned about occasional days of remote work in an otherwise fully in-person working arrangement.

If an employer allows for remote work, this should not exceed 20% of the total articling work period.

Exceptions to the In-Person Articling Requirement

If there are exceptional circumstances that support or justify an exception to the in-person articling requirement, a proposal for a remote articling arrangement may be considered.

An exception to the in-person articling requirement requires sufficient evidence of appropriate supervision, experiential learning and mentorship, and sufficient opportunity to attend court, client meetings, or other relevant work-related activities in person. Remote articling arrangements require the submission and approval of a remote articles proposal. Approval of remote articles does not exempt either the principal or articling student from adhering to the terms of the Articling Agreement, or from fulfilling all other requirements set out in [Part 7](#) of the *Law Society of Saskatchewan Rules*.

Remote articling arrangements are considered on a case-by-case basis taking into consideration numerous factors, including whether:

- There are opportunities for regular face-to-face meetings when the principal's workplace is either fully remote/online or operates under a hybrid work model.
- There are ample opportunities for in-person attendance at interviews, hearings, examinations for discovery, trials, appeals, etc.
- There are opportunities for in-person attendance at client meetings and meetings with opposing counsel, as appropriate.
- The principal and articling student agree to connect daily online.
- The principal and articling student agree to meet in person as frequently as feasible (expectations about how often the principal and articling student meet in person will depend on a variety of factors).
- The articling student and principal abide by the terms of the Articling Agreement.
- The articling student adheres to the educational requirements set out in the Articling Plan.
- The principal's place of work is in a remote/secluded location.
- The principal and articling student demonstrate how they plan to achieve the goals of experiential training and mentorship, as set out in the remote articles proposal.
- Documented medical reasons exist that may justify/support remote work.

This list is a guide only and is not meant to be exhaustive. All exceptions to the In-Person Articling Requirement are at the sole discretion of the Director of Admissions and Education or their designate.

For more information on submitting a remote articles proposal, please contact bar.admissions@lawsociety.sk.ca.